

CANTUS MEETING FACILITATION SUMMARY REPORT



On Tuesday, March 29, 2016, Jodi Davis / JD Coaching & Consulting met with CANTUS to present the Cultural Review & Recommendations derived from the Organization Development Consulting Engagement that commenced in early March. All members of the Ensemble and the Executive Director were present. The meeting was held at the Cantus office and lasted from 10am – 1pm. The following is a summary of the consultant’s observations relating to: the tone of the meeting, participant engagement, interactive discussion and progress towards resolution.

From the onset of the meeting, the consultant made it clear the meeting was not meant to be a forum for airing grievances. On the contrary, she explained that in her opinion, each individual had ample opportunity to share information and grievances with her that were pertinent to the discovery process. She further explained that the session was meant to be both a presentation of findings and best practices as well as an interactive discussion for commencing the process of resolution. There appeared to be genuine acceptance of the meeting’s intent.

From the beginning, attendees were engaged and participatory. The consultant reviewed an outline for discussion at the beginning of the meeting. Everyone appeared eager to hear the consultant’s findings and they listened intently to a review of the organizational strengths, overarching themes, challenges and organizational needs that were uncovered during the discovery process. There were few questions and no apparent disagreement or divergence of opinion during the early phase of the consultant’s report.

There was no contentious or negative energy in the room. On the contrary, the Executive Director set a tone of openness/transparency and she verbally demonstrated her commitment to exploring resolution and accepting her role for improving communication and collaboration. Likewise, Paul Rudoj, who had an apparent “leadership” role in the engagement process, openly participated, responding to questions for clarification about the feedback the consultant received from interviews. As in any group, some members of the ensemble were more active in the discussion, but when called upon to voice an opinion or ask questions, everyone was responded.

About half way through the meeting, the consultant handed out the full report that included visual models to support the best practices and recommendations. There appeared to be general acceptance of the cultural findings and the need for improvement. There was no verbal disagreement when the consultant suggested that much of the “problem” was related to a failure of a “leadership system” as opposed to the failure of individual leaders (or groups).

While Mary acknowledged her responsibility for exacerbating the inherent problems (lack of time, differing roles, style differences, etc.), it seemed to the consultant that during the course of the meeting, more artists also began accepting their individual part in the situation. She observed changes in body language of a few of the artists which contributed her this impression.



The artists seemed very interested in the educational models presented and asked good questions. When they sought clarification of an item reported by the consultant, it was clear that people just wanted to better understand the stated opinion. If they did not agree with something, it was discussed and explored further in a positive healthy way.

The consultant was most impressed with the groups interest in defining priorities and mapping out strategies for enhancing the organizational structure. They fully embraced the need for more clarity around their respective positions and roles within the organization. The discussion was invigorating and participatory.

At times, the discussion was captured on a white board to help people visualize what a process or document might look like. There was robust discussion on “how to make things happen” including identifying who should “own” or participate in drafting documents to identify improved processes for decision making.

There was a very good discussion about building rapport and relationships. The consultant encouraged people to seek ways to enhance “mutual understanding” of their personal differences and perspectives. The discussion became more personal but at times there were elements of humor which appeared to demonstrate that the group embraced the research and best practices shared by the consultant.

At the end of the session, the consultant asked each person to state how they were feeling and what, if anything was “present” for them that was “missing” before the meeting. Responses included: “Hope”, “Tools”, “New books/articles to read” and “confidence in being able to improve the situation and achieve better communication and enhanced collaboration.

The consultant sincerely hopes the positive energy and momentum for the resolution process continues. The organization is so unique and the collaborative structural model, while challenging at times, is one that serves Cantus well because everyone feels a sense of ownership and responsibility for success.

*Drafted by Jodi Davis
JD Coaching & Consulting
April 19, 2016*

Please refer to this link (<http://www.cantusboard.org/davis-cultural-assessment-32916.html>) for the report dated March 29, 2016.